

Remarks:

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1 and 6 remain in the application. Claims 1 and 6 have been amended. Claims 2-5 and 7-10 have been cancelled.

In item 3 on pages 2-4 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 1-2, 4, and 6-7 have been rejected as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art in view of Durrnagel (US Pat. No. 5,566,617) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

The rejection has been noted and claims 1 and 6 have been amended in an effort to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application. Support for the changes is found in original claims 3-5 and 8-10.

Before discussing the prior art in detail, it is believed that a brief review of the invention as claimed, would be helpful.

Claim 1 calls for, inter alia:

a pressure roller pressing the printing plate onto said plate drum during clamping and unclamping operations of the printing plate, said pressure roller having a non-adhesive surface; and

a pick-up roller in contact with said pressure roller, said pick-up roller having an adhesive surface and picking up combustion residue adhering to said pressure roller. (Emphasis added.)

Claim 6 calls for, inter alia:

In an exposure device for exposing thermal printing plates by selectively burning away a surface of a printing plate, the exposure device having a plate drum for holding the printing plates and a pressure roller with a non-adhesive surface pressing the printing plate onto the plate drum during clamping and unclamping operations of the printing plate, a cleaning device comprising:

a pick-up roller in contact with the pressure roller, said pick-up roller having an adhesive surface and picking up combustion residue adhering to the pressure roller. (Emphasis added.)

Durnnagel does not teach a pick-up roller which is in contact with a pressure roller and picks up residue adhering to the pressure roller, as recited in the claims of the instant application. Instead, Durnnagel teaches a conventionally known washing roller 2 with a surface made of a soft elastic material which is wettable with a washing fluid (see column 2, lines 17-33 and column 3, lines 29-47). In Durnnagel, the surface to be cleaned is not a pressure roller used to press a printing plate onto a plate drum during clamping and unclamping operations, but instead it is the surface of either a blanket cylinder 1 or of an impression cylinder in a printing press (see column 1, lines 35-43).

With a washing roller, the residues are dissolved by the washing fluid, brushed off the cylinder by rotation of the washing roller relative to the cylinder surface, and then

washed away with the washing fluid. In contrast, with a pick-up roller, the residues are transferred from the surface to be cleaned to the pick-up roller and then they remain on the pick-up roller because they stick better on the pick-up roller than on the surface to be cleaned due to a higher adhesive force of the pick-up roller. Since a washing roller and a pick-up roller work according to completely different cleaning principles, a washing roller cannot be considered equivalent to a pick-up roller. Nowhere in Durrnagel is it mentioned that the residues are transferred to the washing roller and that they remain stuck on the washing roller.

Also, Durrnagel does not teach that the blanket cylinder 1 has a non-adhesive surface. Instead, the blanket cylinder 1 carries a rubber blanket which is an adhesive surface. Therefore, printing ink residue and paper fluff remain on the blanket cylinder 1 (see column 1, lines 24-43).

Clearly, neither the admitted prior art nor Durrnagel shows a pressure roller having a non-adhesive surface and a pick-up roller in contact with the pressure roller, having an adhesive surface and picking up combustion residue adhering to the pressure roller, as recited in claims 1 and 6 of the instant application.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claims 1 and 6. Claims 1 and 6 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art. Claims 2, 4 and 7 have been cancelled.

In item 4 on pages 4-5 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 3, 5, and 8-10 have been rejected as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art in view of Durrnagel and further in view of Corrado et al. (US Pat. No. 6,196,128 B1) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Since claims 3, 5 and 8-10 have been cancelled and the features thereof have been added to claims 1 and 6, respectively, the following discussions are directed to claims 1 and 6.

Corrado et al. teach a combination of two contact cleaning rollers (CCR; 18 and 40). The first CCR 18 is in continuous contact with a substrate such as a flexible web and cleans the substrate due to a greater attraction for particles. The second CCR 40 is in discontinuous contact with the first CCR 18 and cleans the first CCR 18 by a still greater attraction for particles (see column 3, lines 34-48 and column 5, lines 19-26).

The fundamentally different feature of the invention of the instant application as compared with the prior art is a combination of a pressure roller with a non-adhesive surface, which contacts the plate drum, and a pick-up roller with an adhesive surface, which contacts the pressure roller. The aim of this combination is to pick up as little residues from the plate as possible with the pressure roller and, if some residue is still transferred to the pressure roller, to pick up as much of the residue as possible with the pick-up roller (see page 7, line 6 to page 8, line 4 of the specification). Therefore, the device according to the invention of the instant application does not have the aim of cleaning the plate on the plate drum.

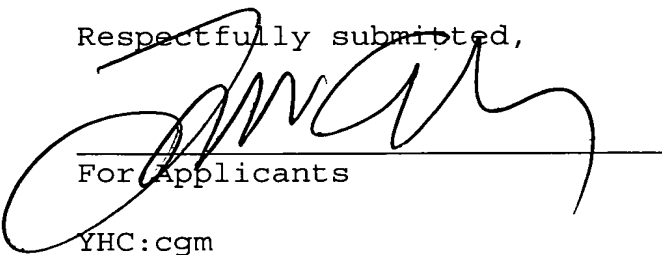
It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claims 1 and 6. Claims 1 and 6 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1 and 6 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made. Please charge any fees which might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner and Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,



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